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Calendar No. 779

101ST CONGRESS
2d Session

SENATE

REPORT
101-424

PROVIDING FOR THE ACQUISITION OF THE WILLIAM JOHNSON HOUSE AND ITS ADDITION TO THE NATCHEZ NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

AUGUST 3 (legislative day, JULY 10), 1990.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. JOHNSTON, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H.R. 4501]

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, to which was referred the Act (H.R. 4501) to provide for the acquisition of the William Johnson House and its addition to the Natchez National Historical Park, and for other purposes, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon without amendment and recommends that the Act do pass.

PURPOSE OF THE MEASURE

The purpose of H.R. 4501, as ordered reported, is to include the lands and structures known as the William Johnson House within the Natchez National Historical Park in Mississippi, and to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to acquire such property by donation, together with all personal property located thereon, and an adjoining building bearing a common wall with the house.

BACKGROUND AND NEED

Natchez National Historical Park was established in 1988 to preserve and interpret the history of Natchez, Mississippi as a significant city in the history of the American South. The legislation also provided that the park should preserve and interpret sites and structures associated with all the peoples of Natchez, including black and free slaves.

William Johnson was born a slave in Mississippi in 1809 and subsequently freed at the age of 12 in 1821. By the 1840's, he had become a successful planter and merchant in Natchez. Johnson was murdered in 1851, but left an extensive diary describing in detail his personal and business life and providing important his-

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torical references for the period. The addition of the William Johnson home to the park would represent the only black-owned home located within the park.

H.R. 4501 authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to acquire the William Johnson House and associated property only by donation. The Mississippi Department of Archives and History has already begun raising funds to acquire the property.

Summary of H.R. 4501

H.R. 4501 amends section 2(b) of Public Law 100–479, which established the Natchez National Historical Park in Mississippi, to include the lands and structures known as the William Johnson House, together with all personal property located on such lands, and an adjacent building bearing a common wall with the house.

The bill also makes two conforming amendments to the park's enabling legislation.

Legislative History

H.R. 4501 passed the House of Representatives by a voice vote on June 25, 1990. Identical legislation, S. 2475, was introduced by in the Senate by Senators Lott and Cochran on April 19, 1990. The Subcommittee held a hearing on S. 2475 on June 26, 1990.

At the business meeting on July 18, 1990, the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources ordered H.R. 4501 favorably reported.

Committee Recommendations and Tabulation of Votes

The Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, in open business session on July 18, 1990, by a unanimous vote of a quorum present, recommends that the Senate pass H.R. 4501 as described herein.

The roll call vote on reporting the measure was 18 yeas, 0 nays, as follows:

YEAS	NAYS
Mr. Johnston	
Mr. Bumpers	
Mr. Ford [1]	
Mr. Bradley	
Mr. Bingaman [1]	
Mr. Wirth	
Mr. Conrad	
Mr. Heflin	
Mr. Rockefeller	
Mr. McClure	
Mr. Hatfield [1]	
Mr. Domenici	
Mr. Wallop [1]	
Mr. Murkowski	
Mr. Nickles	
Mr. Burns	
Mr. Garn [1]	
Mr. McConnell	

[1] Indicates voted by proxy.

Cost and Budgetary Considerations

The following estimate of the cost of this measure has been provided by the Congressional Budget Office:

U.S. Congress,
Congressional Budget Office,
Washington, DC, July 25, 1990.

Hon. J. Bennett Johnston, Jr.,
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Dear Mr. Chairman: The Congressional Budget Office has reviewed H.R. 4501, an act to provide for the acquisition of the William Johnson House and its addition to the Natchez National Historical Park, and for other purposes, as ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources on July 18, 1990. Assuming appropriation of the necessary funds, implementation of this act would cost the federal government about $500,000 over the next three fiscal years and about $200,000 in each year thereafter.

H.R. 4501 would authorize the National Park Service (NPS) to accept donation of the William Johnson House. CBO estimates that the NPS would spend about $500,000 on needed repairs and improvements during fiscal years 1991 through 1993. Beginning in 1994, the agency would spend about $200,000 to operate the renovated structure.

Enactment of this legislation would have no impact on the budgets of state or local governments.

On June 21, 1990, CBO prepared a cost estimate for H.R. 4501, as ordered reported by the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs on June 20, 1990. The two estimates are identical.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Deborah Reis, who can be reached at 226–2860.

Sincerely,

Robert D. Reischauer,
Director.

Regulatory Impact Evaluation

In compliance with paragraph 11(b) of rule XXVI of the standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee makes the following evaluation of the regulatory impact which would be incurred in carrying out H.R. 4501. The Act is not a regulatory measure in the sense of imposing Government-established standards or significant economic responsibilities on private individuals and businesses.

No personal information would be collected in administering the program. Therefore, there would be no impact on personal privacy.

Little, if any, additional paperwork would result from the enactment of H.R. 4501, as ordered reported.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

On June 13, 1990, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources requested legislative reports from the Department of the Interior and the Office of Management and Budget setting forth executive views on S. 2475, identical companion legislation to H.R. 4501. These reports had not been received at the time the report on H.R. 4501 was filed. When the reports become available, the Chairman will request that they be printed in the Congressional Record for the advice of the Senate. The testimony provided by the National Park Service at the Subcommittee hearing follows:

STATEMENT OF JAMES M. RIDENOUR, DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Mr. Chairman, we strongly support the enactment of S. 2475, which would include the William Johnson House within the boundaries of the Natchez National Historical Park. The park was established by Public Law 100-479 on October 7, 1988, to:

> "(1) preserve and interpret the history of Natchez Mississippi, as a significant city in the American South;
>
> "(2) preserve and interpret the sites and structures associated with all the peoples of Natchez and its surrounding area from earliest inhabitants to the modern era, and including blacks both slave and free;
>
> "(3) preserve and interpret the region's social, political and economic development, with particular emphasis on the pre- and post Civil War eras; and
>
> "(4) preserve and interpret the region's commercial and agricultural history, especially in relation to the Mississippi River and cotton."

Under the 1988 Act, the park consists of historic districts in Natchez and its immediate environs (to be established by the Secretary of the Interior following a study), together with the properties known as Melrose and Fort Rosalie. S. 2475 would amend the Act to add the William Johnson House as a component of the park and authorize its acquisition in fee by donation.

Inclusion of the William Johnson House would add significantly to our ability to interpret the story of free blacks in this Mississippi River city.

Nowhere in the antebellum South was a slave-based society and economy more dominant than in the region surrounding Natchez. It is significant, therefore, that William Johnson, a free black in this society, could prosper and even gain widespread community respect.

The William Johnson House in Natchez was the residence of barber William Johnson, a free black whose published diary provides the most complete and accurate account of the life of a free black in the antebellum south now available to us. The William Johnson House was individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1976. The house is also one of the buildings included in

the Natchez on-Top-of-the-Hill Historic District, which was listed in the National Register in 1979.

Born a slave in 1809, Johnson was freed in 1820. After learning the profession of barbering from his brother-in-law, Johnson eventually became proprietor and owner of two barber shops—a large shop on Main Street in the heart of the Natchez commercial district, and a smaller shop near the riverfront in Natchez-Under-the-Hill.

An astute businessman, Johnson invested the earnings derived from barbering in various commercial enterprises including urban real estate and a plantation. He also owned slaves who worked on his plantation and in his barber shops. Because he was adroit in financial matters, Johnson was frequently employed by white businessmen as an agent in negotiating land purchases and other transactions. Johnson's enterprising nature and unswerving honesty earned him the respect of the entire Natchez community, and by the 1840s he held the ranking position among the town's free black society.

In June 1851, Johnson was murdered by a white man as the result of a dispute over a tract of land. Despite public outrage, the legal restrictions of race prevented the conviction of this murderer. After his funeral, the Natchez Courier lauded Johnson as a man of "peaceable character," "excellent standing," and "as one well worthy of imitation by all his class."

Erected in 1841, the William Johnson House is a two-story, brick townhouse. A single commercial space occupies the ground floor. The second floor residential space still retains its original floor plan and some original finishes. The attic dormer windows face the street. Behind the house is a two-story brick kitchen building erected in the 1890s to replace an earlier kitchen which burned.

Portions of the Johnson House, including the primary facade and the rear gallery and steps, have been restored. Archeological work has taken place on the site of the original kitchen. The owners are continuing the restoration and have recently let a contract for masonry repairs to the rear wall. The Johnson House shares a common side wall with another structure of about the same age. This adjacent building is in good condition and is currently used as an office.

The Johnson family retained ownership of the house until 1976 when the Preservation Society of Ellicot Hill purchased it and undertook partial restoration. Ten years later the Mississippi Department of Archives and History joined the efforts to restore and interpret the structure.

The acquisition of the William Johnson House as part of the Natchez National Historical Park would provide the unparalleled opportunity to interpret the experience of free blacks in Natchez and the antebellum South. This is currently not a major theme at any other unit of the National Park System. It would also be an excellent counter-

part to the theme of slavery which will also be a focal point of interpretation at the Natchez park.

The Johnson House would make an excellent interpretive facility. The first floor is ideal for exhibit space and a restored second floor could be used to interpret the domestic life of a free black family. The kitchen building could provide additional exhibit space or could be restored. The building sharing a common wall with the Johnson House offers space which could be used for offices, meetings, and visitor contact station, or a staging area for walking tours. Proposals for restoration would be subject to review under Federal preservation laws.

The bill authorizes acquisition of the Johnson House, personal property, and the adjacent building, only by donation. The existing owners are receptive to this proposal, although we have no firm commitments from them to donate their properties if the bill is enacted.

Current cost estimates for development, including restoration and exhibit design, and annual operation of the William Johnson House are as follows:

Development:	*Amount*
Restoration	$250,000
Historic structures report	60,000
Exhibits and furnishings	100,000
Total	410,000
Annual operating costs	175,000

These estimates are subject to change as plans are completed. Also, funding would be subject to the normal priority-setting process in the budget.

This concludes my prepared statement, Mr. Chairman. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Changes in Existing Law

In compliance with paragraph 12 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, changes in existing law made by the Act H.R. 4501, as ordered reported, are shown as follows (existing law proposed to be omitted is enclosed in black brackets, new matter is printed in italic, existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman):

Act of October 7, 1988

(102 Stat. 2324; 16 U.S.C. 410oo–1)

* * * * * * *

Sec. 2. (a) In order to provide for the benefit, inspiration, and education of the American people, there is hereby established the Natchez National Historical Park (hereinafter in this Act referred to as the "park") in the State of Mississippi.

(b) The park shall consist of the historic districts established under this Act and the following properties:

(1) The lands and structures known as Melrose, together with all personal property located on such lands.

(2) The lands and improvements thereon known as, or associated with, Fort Rosalie. The property referred to in paragraph (2) shall be included within the park only if the Secretary of the Interior (hereinafter in this Act referred to as the "Secretary") determines that the historic resources of Fort Rosalie are of sufficient national significance and integrity to warrant inclusion in the National Park System. The Secretary shall make such determination after receiving from the Governor of the State of Mississippi and the mayor of the city of Natchez, in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer, a recommendation based on scholarly research as to the national significance and integrity of such historic resources.

(3) The lands and structures known as the William Johnson House, together with all personal property located on such lands, and the building adjacent thereto which bears a common wall.

(c) The Secretary shall prepare a map of the lands included within the park. Such map shall be on file and available for public inspection in the offices of the National Park Service at the park and at the Department of the Interior in the District of Columbia. The Secretary may from time to time make minor revisions in the boundary of the park in accordance with section 7(c) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (16 U.S.C. 4601–4 and following).

SEC. 3. Except as otherwise provided in this section, the Secretary may acquire, by donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds, or exchange, land or interests in land, together with structures and other improvements thereon and personal property, which is included within the park. In addition the Secretary may acquire by any such means such personal property associated with the park as he deems appropriate for interpretation of the park and such additional lands and properties as may be necessary for purposes of an administrative headquarters and administrative site. Any land, interests in land, structures, improvements, or personal property owned by the State of Mississippi or any political subdivision thereof, may be acquired only by donation. The Secretary may not acquire fee title to any property other than the property he deems necessary for an administrative site and headquarters and the property referred to in paragraph [(1) or (2)] *(1), (2), or (3)* of section 2 and the Secretary may not acquire the property referred to in paragraph (1) of section 2 unless at least 25 per centum of the fair market value of such property (as determined by the Secretary) is donated to the United States in connection with such acquisition. *The Secretary may not acquire the property referred to in paragraph (3) of section 2(b) except by donation.*

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